United Nations S/PV.6001

Security Council

Sixty-third year

Provisional

6001 st meeting

Monday, 27 October 2008, 10 a.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Zhang Yesui	(China)
Members:	Belgium	Mr. Belle
	Burkina Faso	Mr. Tiendrébéogo
	Costa Rica	Mr. Urbina
	Croatia	Mr. Skračić
	France	Mr. Ripert
	Indonesia	Mr. Natalegawa
	Italy	Mr. Terzi di Sant'Agata
	Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	Mr. Dabbashi
	Panama	Mr. Suescum
	Russian Federation	Mr. Dolgov
	South Africa	Mr. Kumalo
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Quarrey
	United States of America	Ms. DiCarlo
	Viet Nam	Mr. Le Luong Minh

Agenda

The situation in Côte d'Ivoire

Eighteenth progress report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (S/2008/645)

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-154A.

08-56874 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Côte d'Ivoire

Eighteenth progress report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (S/2008/645)

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I should like to inform the Council that I have received a letter from the representative of Côte d'Ivoire, in which he requests to be invited to participate in the consideration of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite that representative to participate in the consideration of the item, without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Bailly (Côte d'Ivoire) took a seat at the Council table.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): In accordance with the understanding reached in the course of the Council's prior consultations, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Mr. Choi Young-Jin, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Côte d'Ivoire and Head of the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire.

There being no objection, it is so decided. I invite Mr. Choi to take a seat at the Council table.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Members of the Council have before them document S/2008/645, which contains the eighteenth progress report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire.

At this meeting, the Security Council will hear a briefing by Mr. Choi Young-Jin, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Côte d'Ivoire and Head of the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire . I now give the floor to Mr. Choi Young-Jin.

Mr. Choi Young-Jin: The eighteenth progress report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI), which is before the Council(S/2008/645), provides an update on the major developments in Côte d'Ivoire since his most recent report of 10 July 2008. With your permission, Mr. President, I would like to focus my briefing today on the most crucial issues of this period for Côte d'Ivoire, that is, identification and elections.

Those two issues will have a decisive and direct bearing on the future of Côte d'Ivoire and indeed on the UNOCI exit strategy. The Secretary-General's report refers to the seriousness of the logistical challenges facing the Ivorian dual identification-electoral process, which are bound to cause delays. But, at the same time, the report reveals that this process has now reached important milestones such as the successful financing arrangement and the launching of the identification process. At present, the accumulating delays constitute the foremost and primary concern for us because they may put at risk the entire Ivorian peace process.

It is almost one and a half months since the identification and voter registration process was launched on 15 September with a view to completing it on 30 October. Unfortunately, however, the pace of progress has been painfully slow. Acceleration factors will soon be introduced and many sites will soon attain "cruising speed". Yet the magnitude of the delay has taken almost everybody by surprise.

The main reason for that delay is the logistical complexity of the identification process. In Côte d'Ivoire, the elections process has become inextricably enmeshed with the identification process. Those two crucial and historic events are concomitantly unfolding in the country; 11 million people are expected to be identified with a very sophisticated identification mechanism and 9 million people are expected to register as voters. To make matters more complex, the identification process is in the charge of a dual operator system consisting of a private French company, SAGEM, and the Ivorian National Institute of Statistics responsible for the process.

To make matters even more complicated, the overall supervisory and implementing role has been

confided to the Independent Electoral Commission, which has a quadripartite composition. Three quarters of its members, including its president, have been provided by the two main opposition political parties and the Forces nouvelles. That mosaic composition is certainly sufficient cause for delay.

The accumulating delays are preoccupying. Yet we should not lose sight of the significant and strategic progress made until now, and we should continue to build on it. Indeed, delays notwithstanding, solid progress has been made: peace has been sufficiently restored so as to allow people to travel freely across the country; all the political actors remain firmly committed to the identification-electoral process; and the Mobile Court operation is now complete, with excellent results. As I reported in my previous briefing, all the financial arrangements for both the identification process and the elections have been secured. The Ivorian identification process and elections have been going slowly but making solid progress. In terms of financing, the Ivorian Government is bearing the lion's share of the cost, to the tune of around $200 million dollars. The long-awaited identification process has been launched with an enthusiastic participation from the population. I have visited several identification sites and met people queuing for several hours, some since 3 a.m., in order not to miss the identification process. That was a very heartwarming experience.

All that progress allows us to acknowledge that the delays due to bureaucratic red tape and logistical difficulties will remain manageable as long as momentum is kept alive. For the first time in the Ivorian crisis, the delays are mainly due to logistical aspects and not to political issues. The window of opportunity remains open. Millions of people will, in several months, be in possession of an identity card for the first time in their life, enabling them to travel and engage in business freely. The question of "Ivoirité" — or Ivorianness — that has been at the heart of the troubled Ivorian politics for the last two decades will be resolved once and for all. Thus, having reached milestones of such importance, the Ivorian process now seems irreversible.

As the Ivorian actors are struggling with the logistical delays, we, the international community, must redouble our efforts to bring timely financial, technical and logistical assistance to the Ivorian identification and electoral process.

With that in mind, UNOCI, along with the other United Nations entities and international community bodies in Abidjan, is trying to be as creative as it can to assist the Ivorian identification and electoral process: international donors are providing around $50 million for the electoral process, which will cost about $80 million; UNOCI transported the first batch of electoral materials, 15 tons of them, from Europe to Côte d'Ivoire using its own aircraft in July; and we have been providing air conditioners and other critical equipment to the identification sites as needed.

Now, having recently identified the lack of transportation means as one of the major impediments to the speedy progress of the identification process, UNOCI is, in cooperation with the Independent Electoral Commission, currently devising an overall transportation assistance scheme, dubbed Operation Transport. UNOCI will be making available its cars and drivers to all 34 regional electoral commissioners in the critical cities of Abidjan and Bouaké. Our military and police units are planning transportation of a significant portion of the identification agents and material throughout the country outside those two cities. UNOCI has entered into negotiation with Ivorian private transportation companies with a view to providing vehicles to the entire 1,000 identification sites in Abidjan and Bouaké.

Perhaps most importantly, in terms of planning and safeguarding the elections, UNOCI is providing valuable advice and assistance through its certification mandate and its Electoral Assistance Division. UNOCI, along with other United Nations entities, especially UNDP, will continue to give support by providing technical and logistical assistance to the Ivorian electoral process.

I trust that, with the combined efforts of the Ivorians and the international community, the Ivorian peace process will successfully meet the challenges of the elections and reunification of the country, which in turn will provide UNOCI with an exit strategy.

Before closing, let me touch upon the security issues. By virtue of the Ouagadougou Political Agreement, all Ivorian political actors have now formally joined the political mainstream of the elections. The impartial forces — of Licorne and UNOCI — are highly dependable and credible, to such a degree that virtually no one in Côte d'Ivoire deems a military provocation or disorder during the election

period plausible. On the other hand, civil disorders, as evidenced by the recent sporadic disturbances at identification sites, will remain UNOCI's main concern in terms of safeguarding both the process and the results of the election.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Côte d'Ivoire, Mr. Choi Young-Jin, for his statement.

There are no further speakers on my list. In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, I now invite Council members to informal consultations to continue our discussion of this subject.

The meeting rose at 10.20 a.m.